

User's Guide

to the Research Center

at the Delaware State

Historic Preservation Office



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What You Can Expect to Find Here: Information about Historic Properties At the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office

Our Information

The Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (DE SHPO) maintains the central archive of information on Delaware's historic buildings, archaeological sites, structures, and objects, gathered from over fifty years of inventorying, researching, evaluating, recording, and/or excavating these historic properties.¹

Information on any one property ranges from a Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) form with a simple description of the architecture of a building or a list of artifacts found on the surface of a site to an in-depth report on the history and significance of a property with very detailed descriptions, photographs, maps, and plan drawings. However, the great majority of properties we describe in our files have only one or two sheets of information with a few black and white photographs dating from the time of the survey. Property histories can only be found with those buildings or sites that are individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places or that appear in a report done for a federal or other special project. If a building you are interested in is part of a historic district, its history is usually not researched in depth.



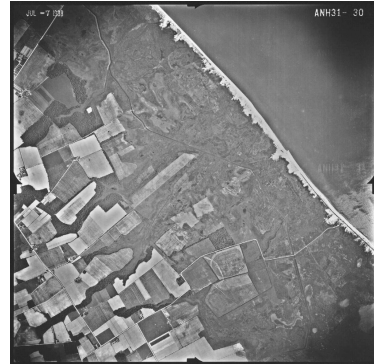
While our information covers the whole state, some areas have been much better surveyed than others; in fact, some towns in Sussex County have never been surveyed. Also, some architectural surveys ignored 20th c. buildings, commercial buildings, industrial buildings, cemeteries, and/or structures. While many archaeological sites have been located, there are few broad area surveys for archaeology.

The Research Center and its associated paper, microfilm, photographic, and digital files house our special collections, which include:

- **Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) forms** with brief descriptive information on identified buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts, more than 50 years old;

¹ What is a **historic property**? It is any physical remains of our past, more than 50 years old. It could be a building such as a home, a church, a gas station, or a factory; a site such as a Native American camp or hunting site, an 18th-c. urban lot, a battlefield, or a 19th-c. park; a structure such as a bridge, a dam, a marsh dyke, or a silo; or an object, such as a statue, a fountain, a boundary marker, or a train signal.

- **black and white photographs** of most individual historic properties and districts;
- **color slide and digital photographs** of some historic properties;
- **maps** of historic property locations;
- **research files** on some historic properties with copies of newspaper articles, cross-references to historical documents held at the Delaware Public Archives or other repositories, and/or references to articles and books of Delaware history and architecture;
- copies of various **historic maps**, such as Beers Atlas of 1868 and USGS topographic maps from the late 19th and early 20th centuries;
- **1937-8 USDA aerial** photographic prints (partial set; note that Delaware Public Archives also has a set of these aerials);
- **National Register nominations**, with detailed descriptions of the appearance and history of individually listed buildings, structures, sites, and objects (note that information on individual buildings within historic districts is very brief and usually restricted to appearance), maps, black and white photographs, and occasional drawings;
- copies of **Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), and Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS)** forms, drawings, black and white photographs, and field notes (Note: the UD Center for Historic Architecture and Design is now the central repository in Delaware for these records and houses the original drawings and photographs for most work done since the late 1980s);
- records of **rehabilitation projects** done with assistance from the Historic Preservation Fund, the federal Investment Tax Credit, or the state Historic Preservation Tax Credit, with descriptions of work done, plan and detail blueprints, and photographs;
- reports on **archaeological and architectural identification and evaluation surveys**;
- reports on **data recovery excavations** at archaeological sites, including burial treatment and disposition resulting from Delaware's Unmarked Human Remains Act;
- reports on **architectural recordation** projects;
- reports on **historic contexts and planning studies**; and
- **feasibility studies** on the reuse of specific historic buildings.



The DE SHPO also has a collection of books and periodicals on architectural history, history of Delaware and the Mid-Atlantic region, historic preservation and planning issues, and technical manuals on rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings. We also

have available free publications and brochures from the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other organizations on a number of preservation issues and topics. The *Preservation Briefs* series, in particular, gives very helpful technical information on rehabilitation of older buildings.

Sources of Our Information

Our records include information from early private surveys, such as the 1930s through 1970s surveys and excavations of archaeological sites performed by avocational archaeological societies, and the 1960s survey of early historic buildings in northern New Castle County performed by the Junior Women's League. There is also information from two Depression period federal programs, the Historic American Buildings Survey, which created work for architects and draftsmen in measuring, photographing and drawing significant historic buildings, and the National Historic Landmarks program, which researched and designated properties of national significance.

The bulk of our information dates from the establishment of state and federal programs to survey and record information on historic and cultural properties systematically. In 1965, Delaware created the position of State Archaeologist under the Delaware Archaeological Board to look for and excavate archaeological sites. In 1972, Delaware began its partnership with the federal government in historic preservation under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). Delaware hired its first historian and architectural historian to look for and record historic buildings. In 1977, Delaware's archaeological program was rolled into this partnership, and the position of State Archaeologist eliminated.

Between the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grant program, with its money for broad-area surveys, and the requirements in Section 106 for federal agencies to consider historic properties during project planning, both mandated by NHPA, enormous quantities of information have been generated. Over time, county, City of Wilmington, and Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) preservation planning programs, university graduate programs in historic preservation, state requirements to protect unmarked human remains, and the establishment of Preservation Delaware, Inc., have created more sources of information and more users for the information we hold.

Access to Our Information

The DE SHPO's materials, as a special collection, do not circulate and can only be used in the Research Center or as arranged elsewhere to provide easier physical access. Access to certain information, particularly about archaeological sites, may be limited based on restrictions allowed by the National Historic Preservation Act. See *Using the DE SHPO's Research Center* for more details on getting an appointment to use our materials or arranging access to restricted materials.



Office

Accommodating Persons with Disabilities

The building that currently houses the DE SHPO is not yet accessible, and has exterior entrance steps. There is also no elevator to the Research Center which is located on the second floor. Disabled persons are accommodated in various ways. If a person is unable to negotiate the entrance and/or interior stairs, the requested documents, a microfilm reader, and a computer (as needed) will be provided in an accessible location in Dover, at the Delaware Public Archives (DPA). Staff is available to read material to visually handicapped persons unable to read our files. In addition, DPA has a computer available that reads web pages and other digital files aloud.

How Our Records Are Stored and Arranged

The DE SHPO's documents may be in paper, bound or unbound, from letter to blueprint size; on 16 mm or 35 mm microfiche or microfilm roll; or in PC-compatible digital formats, including ASCII text, Microsoft Word, Rich Text Format, Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format (pdf), Microsoft Access, and ArcView. The DE SHPO has a microfiche reader, a microform reader/printer, a photocopier, a scanner, computer, and printer available to provide ways to read and copy information, including copying digital files to floppy, zip, or CD disks. There is usually a fee for reproduction. (See the attached fee schedule.)



Each property is indexed by the Cultural Resource Survey (CRS) number, a number assigned when the property is first identified and descriptive forms filled out for it. This number is used for mapping the property and for filing all information associated with it. Indices are also maintained for properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places and for all reports, books, periodicals, and other literature filed at the DE SHPO.

The DE SHPO is currently developing databases on historic properties, as well as Geographic Information System (GIS) data layers showing property locations and areas surveyed. This will provide better information retrieval and distribution of information on historic properties. The overall system is called the Delaware Cultural Resources Information Management System (CRIMS). The developed sections of the databases and GIS layers are available for use in the Research Center, or as a digital copy (provided you have the appropriate software to make use of it elsewhere).

Copyright Responsibility

Information created by the DE SHPO or its sub-grantees, in any form, is subject to our copyright. It is your responsibility to see that such information receives the proper attribution to the DE SHPO and, if warranted, that the DE SHPO disclaimer statement is included if you publish or distribute our information in any format, including electronically. Information needing copyright statements includes inventory and National Register forms, photographs from negatives owned by the DE SHPO, electronic data

from DE SHPO databases or GIS data sets, or copies of maps produced for exhibits. Any material on microform is printed with the note and date functions of the reader-printer turned on, so that you will know when and where you acquired the information.

However, not all information on microform in the DE SHPO files is owned by the DE SHPO. For instance, filmed copies of historic maps, newspaper articles, or selections from printed material are still subject to the copyright of the original document. Be sure also to check for and record copyright information from unpublished reports, printed maps, or photographs made from negatives stored in another collection (such as those of Delaware Public Archives, Delaware Archaeological Collections, or Delaware Department of Transportation). The Research Center Assistant or Manager can help you with any questions you may have on these issues.

Information Restrictions

Most of the information created or stored by the DE SHPO is considered public record. Getting access to and obtaining copies of information found in the Research Center do **not** require a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, because providing this information is the core mission of our office. However, the DE SHPO does not provide routine access to office files not maintained in the Research Center. If an individual or organization wants copies of other kinds of administrative files not housed in the Research Center, this does require a written FOIA request to the Director of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, stipulating what specific files are needed.

However, the National Historic Preservation Act², Sec. 304, under the exemption provided by both the federal Freedom of Information Act³, Title 5, Ch. 5, II Sec. 552b(3), and state Freedom of Information Act⁴, ' 10002d(6), allows reasonable limitations on public access to sensitive or confidential historic property information. DE SHPO-signed formal Determinations of Eligibility and National Register nominations, submitted to the Keeper of the National Register (and to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation if developed as part of a Section 106 case) with the information restrictions noted and justified, constitutes consultation with the Secretary of the Interior under this section.

The following types of information are restricted by the National Historic Preservation Act:

- **location** of archaeological sites and other threatened historic properties;
- **character** of certain archaeological sites, including those containing burials or highly marketable artifacts, and other types of properties, including those that could be targeted for theft if their contents were known;
- **ownership** of property if the knowledge of it is perceived to lead to invasions of privacy; and
- **location and character of traditional religious properties** if such knowledge

² See www2.cr.nps.gov/laws/NHPA1966.htm for the full text of the law.

³ You can search for the text of this law on-line at www4.law.cornell.edu/uscode/.

⁴ You can search for the text of this law on-line at www.michie.com/.

could lead to impeding the use of a traditional religious site by practitioners.

Access to these is limited to:

- DE SHPO staff;
- sub-grantees, in area of jurisdiction or grant project;
- consultants working on state or federally assisted, funded, licensed, or permitted projects, in immediate area of project;
- landowner or developer of a parcel, or consultant working for a landowner or developer, in immediate vicinity of the parcel (may be required to provide a notarized letter from the landowner);
- state and local agencies' staff or their consultants for planning purposes, but with a restriction on scale of maps that they create for the general public, whether at planning workshops or in a final plan or report; and
- others if they can demonstrate a need to know in writing and are willing to protect the information from disclosure in any work they produce (for example, a student working on a paper, with a letter of request from his or her advisor on the school's letterhead).

In addition, access to **floor plans of public buildings** is restricted in response to the Governor's Executive Order 22 Regarding Building Safety (Oct. 19, 2001)⁵. Access to this information requires a letter to the Director of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, stating the information needed and the reasons for the request. This must be reviewed and approved by the Director before access is granted. This review may include a background check by the State Police. Any fees associated with such reviews must be paid by the applicant.

Other Sources of Information on Delaware's History and Historic Places

Delaware Public Archives (DPA) maintains original and microfilm copies of historical documents created by Delaware's governments (colonial, state, county, and municipal) and court systems. DPA also has an extensive collection of original maps depicting Delaware's historic development. In addition, they maintain a collection of books relating to Delaware's history. See www.state.de.us/sos/dpa and click on 'Collections' for on-line guides to using DPA's various collections. The Search Room at DPA is open 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Saturday and on Wednesday and Thursday until 7:00 pm, excluding state holidays, and is fully handicapped accessible. Delaware Public Archives is located at the Hall of Records, 121 Duke of York St., Dover.

Delaware State Museums (DSM) maintains the Delaware Archaeological Collections, including artifacts, field notes, photographs, drawings, and

⁵ The full text of this order can be found on-line at www.state.de.us/governor/executive_orders/2001/eo022.htm.



maps from DE SHPO surveys, most Section 106 surveys and data recovery excavations, and some avocational archaeological collections. DSM has set up type and study collections for comparative purposes and houses an extensive collection of site reports, books, and periodicals related to Delaware and North American archaeology. In addition, DSM maintains the Delaware Museum Collections, which are a rich source of comparative information on Delaware's material culture. These collections are not open to the general public, but displays and information on Delaware's archaeology are available to the public at the Delaware Archaeology Museum, 316 S. Governors Ave., Dover. DSM also maintains a number of historic building museums statewide, with displays of furniture, ceramics, tools, and other material possessions representing Delaware's past. Changing exhibits are displayed at the Delaware State Visitor Center, 406 Federal St., Dover, and the Zwaanendael Museum, 102 Kings Highway, Lewes. Information on all DSM exhibit buildings can be found on-line at www.destatemuseums.org. Access to the Delaware Archaeological Collections for archaeological professionals and students is available by appointment only, through Chuck Fithian, Curator for Archaeology (302-739-6402). Access to the Delaware Museum Collections is also available by appointment only, through Claudia Leister, Curator for Collections (302-739-6402).

Historical Society of Delaware at 505 Market St., Wilmington, maintains a collection of original documents and maps related to Delaware's history. See www.hsd.org/library.htm for a brief discussion of their holdings, a very helpful genealogical research guide, contact information, directions, and their hours.

Hagley Museum and Library on the Brandywine River north of Wilmington has a tremendous collection related to industrial history, both national and Delaware. See www.hagley.lib.de.us/library.html for a description of their collections, their on-line catalog (still under development but already very useful), contact information, directions, and their hours.

Delaware Genealogical Society maintains a web site, <http://delgensoc.org/>, with helpful notes and information about various projects they are undertaking. The Society meets at the Historical Society of Delaware in Wilmington.

University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research, housed in Munroe Hall on the University's main campus in Newark, has performed archaeological surveys and excavations throughout Delaware and neighboring areas of Maryland and Pennsylvania. It maintains its own repository of artifacts and associated records for the archaeological work conducted by the Center.

University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Design, at 201 Allison Hall on the University's main campus in Newark, is establishing a central repository for the more recent records of Delaware's Historic American Buildings Survey and Historic American Engineering Record. In addition, the Center has performed a number of surveys and special studies of Delaware's history and

historic architecture throughout the state. Their web site is www.udel.edu/CHAD/.

Local historical societies exist around the state, and often have collections of both documents and material culture illustrating the history of their area. Some of the larger ones, such as the Lewes Historical Society and the New Castle Historical Society, operate one or more house museums. Many of these groups also maintain web sites.

Other sources of information include the counties and the City of Wilmington preservation planners, local libraries, and local governments. Wilmington, Dover, New Castle, Lewes, and other municipalities have their own city-designated historic districts or historic properties.

Organizations Outside of Delaware

Historical Society of Pennsylvania, at 1300 Locust St., Philadelphia, has a number of records in their collections that pertain to Delaware, especially pre-Revolutionary War Delaware. See their web site www.hsp.org/index.html for their on-line catalog, contact information, directions, and hours.

Library of Congress maintains many of the nation's historic records. Information on federally owned or developed historic properties in Delaware, such as lighthouses or military installations, can be found in their collections. In addition, they have many historic maps and atlases that include Delaware, and maintain the records of the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record. Their web site is www.loc.gov.

Maryland State Archives, at 350 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis, also includes a number of early records that pertain to the area of Delaware once claimed as part of the Maryland Colony, primarily parts of Sussex County today. See their web site www.mdarchives.state.md.us for their on-line collections, contact information, directions, and hours.

Pennsylvania State Archives, part of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, is on the corner of 3rd and Forster streets, Harrisburg. It holds records of the Proprietary Government that also governed colonial Delaware. See their web site www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/overview.htm for their on-line collections, descriptions of their holdings, contact information, directions, and hours.

Smithsonian Institution, on the Mall in Washington, D.C., holds some archaeological collections from Delaware generally excavated in the 1940s and 1950s, the Springer House, a logged house moved from Delaware (the building and history of the family were used in the *After the Revolution* exhibit at the National Museum of American History), and records pertaining to Delaware at the Archives Center, including a short history of the Jackson Car Co. of Wilmington

online. See their web site americanhistory.si.edu/archives/home.htm for descriptions of their collections, on-line catalog, contact information, directions, and hours.

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NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20240.

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